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ABSTRACT

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and Dialects is a complex task. However, there is a growing awareness of the similarities of the various types of English teaching, as well as a recognition of the need for communication among teachers. Well-designed TESL or TEFL curricula, regardless of the type of program, share certain objectives and principles which emphasize the need for integration of the student into the target language community through carefully designed linguistic and cultural instruction. The differences in the varying TESOLD programs can be summarized as follows: (1) ESL teachers of immigrants and residents deal with the problems of acculturation to the English environment; (2) bilingual teachers face the complex problems arising from an experimental method; (3) teachers of students with Black English dialects confront the problem of an ethnic identification that is threatened by language standardization; (4) ESL for transient foreign students deals with the need for partial acculturation for the accomplishment of immediate goals; and (5) adult education programs cope with complex problems due to the variety of students. In all these programs, the most important variable is the prepared teacher, whose enthusiasm and interest are the primary motivation for the students. (LG)

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THE CRUCIAL VARIABLE IN TESOLD: THE TEACHER

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A number of seemingly disparate circumstances prompted me to select the title and subject of my talk with you today. First, a question one of you asked me during my last visit: "What is the most important variable in teaching?" Then, in a recent address Professor B. J. Robinett (immediate past president of TESOL) dwelt on the four principal domains of TESOL, including as they do, teaching English as a second language or dialect in the United States, teaching English to adult foreigners or residents in English-speaking countries, and as a foreign language abroad. As I listened to her and later read her article[1] I became more conscious than ever that not enough has been said and written about the complexity of the teacher's role in each of the situations she described and about the lack of appreciation by too many segments of society of the teacher's herculean task.

My concern about the lack of recognition of classroom teachers' efforts was reinforced as I reread books like Silberman's *Crisis in the Classroom;* as I saw irresponsible statements in the press such as "Learners have no reading problems but only teacher problems"; as I read articles on the necessity for teacher accountability and for the clear delineation of teacher behaviors; and as I saw sketches of classrooms in which every language learner was engaged in an individualized activity.

Perhaps I feel more strongly than many of you about such matters because, having been a language teacher and supervisor for forty years at every level of the school system in the United States, and having worked with teachers in divers countries such as Poland, Turkey, Morocco, Spain, England, Italy and Yugoslavia, I realize how unfair to teachers and how removed from reality many of such books and articles really are.

Permit me only two autobiographical examples. In a language school in which I taught non-English speaking students from 19 different countries, the supervisor

insisted, despite my grave doubts, particularly after reading the Basic English translation of Churchill's *Blood, Sweat and Tears,* that the Basic English method was to be used without modification since, to her, it was the only viable one. In another school, and I cite an article written in 1948, my class register was 30; the age span was 12 to 15; there were four boys who had never been to school anywhere; ten who had had between two and four years of schooling in their country of origin, of those ten, only three had been to a school for a year in the continental United States; 16 boys were native English speakers with reading levels of from 2-6 years. I am certain that the same statistics could have been duplicated in numerous other places in the United States at that time. What is more tragic is that they could undoubtedly be duplicated in many schools today both here and in countries abroad.

Several other circumstances suggested many of the thoughts I would like to share with you: a letter in the *TESOL Newsletter* praising the National TESOL Convention but bemoaning the fact that it addressed itself primarily to problems within the United States; a number of questions I found in my files asked by teachers and administrators in London, Toronto, Jerusalem, Belgrade; at Lackland Air Force Base; in Milwaukee; in Salinas, California and Kingsville, Texas, which underscored the similarity of concerns in all places where English is taught as a second or a foreign language; and, finally, my pleasure in reading the 1972 Presidential Address by Dwight Bolinger to the Linguistic Society of America with the provocative title--and provocative contents--"Truth is a Linguistic Question." It was in that article that I learned about the newly established section in NCTE and of its concern with "Doublespeak."

While I shall try to keep my focus on the teacher as he interacts with students, colleagues, and others, I hope to touch on four aspects of TESOL suggested

above: (1) similarities existing even within the most far-flung situations; (2) some of the differences inherent in offerings for children and adults in TESL and TEFL programs; (3) several issues of current concern to teachers; (4) the observed competencies of the magnificent corps of teachers I have worked with everywhere; and, in conclusion, a plea for reconsidering our priorities.

Let us start with similarities. Since we are teaching human beings a language in a social situation, it is only natural that numerous parallels should exist in English-teaching programs everywhere. Without wishing to belabor a point made many times at our convention and in our journal, theories and axioms of several sciences--psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics, not simply linguistics alone, underlie the planning of TESL programs of excellence.

Research workers and teachers know that all learners at whatever age level enter English programs in possession of a perfectly adequate first language and of a cultural background which they cherish because these represent badges of self-identity and of group affiliation. They know, too, that, depending upon the students' ages and their home-community and previous school experiences, their attitude toward learning cannot help but be affected by the political, economic and racial problems of the society from which they have come and of that in which the school is located.

As human beings, they will come to us with individual and complex personalities, with varied modes of acquiring knowledge, with different aptitudes for learning, and with attitudes resulting not only from their backgrounds but also from their feelings--justified or not--of acceptance or rejection by teachers, peers and neighbors in their present environment. Their attitudes will also have been shaped, and will continue to be shaped to some extent, by the attitudes of their families and peers.

With respect to the question of attitude, I cannot agree with some of the statements in recent literature that there is very little the school or teacher can do about work habits and motivation because of the immutable traditions or value systems of some ethnic groups. I have witnessed dramatic changes in students in attitudes toward both learning and perseverance when English or any other subject was taught by a sensitive, well-prepared, enthusiastic teacher. It is too easy to blame genetic influences, ethnic traditions, or socioeconomic conditions for the fact that some of our students do not learn. We will return later to some of the external factors which may account for learning and teaching difficulties.

You will have noted that I started with psychological and sociological considerations rather than with language and linguistics. This is because I feel that the learner and teacher and the sociocultural milieu in which they interact are of primary importance in the arduous process of second language acquisition.

Linguistics, however, has much to contribute to this process. Its findings are valid in any situation in which language is taught. In order to teach English effectively, we must know everything we can about such pertinent matters as the nature, the structure, and the functions of language; the factors included in the term "communicative competence"; the linguistic and cultural interferences which may retard the learning of the second language; the most efficient ways of determining the contrasting linguistic elements in native and second languages; the reasons why students make persistent errors as they move toward the acquisition of English; the most effective means of helping students articulate sounds and learn the other features of the sound system; and the most scientific--but practical and feasible--procedures for selecting and ordering linguistic items to be taught. These and other research findings--too numerous to be mentioned here--are the province of linguistics and constitute a large segment of the fundamental

knowledge needed and sought avidly by teachers everywhere. I am firmly convinced that all teachers are eager to keep abreast of developments in any field which will foster learning.

Let us take a closer look at some skills and knowledge teachers of English anywhere are expected to possess and at some basic principles of curriculum development. These are predicated on questions submitted to me which appear to be of concern to the majority of teachers. All teachers are expected:

(1) to learn how the findings of several disciplines (linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology and pedagogy) can facilitate learning and teaching;

(2) to acquire an awareness of the significant features of the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their pupils as a bridge to an understanding and acceptance of linguistic interference and possible cultural conflict;

(3) to learn everything they can about the educational backgrounds--of their older students particularly--as a springboard for the introduction of new concepts and skills and as a basis for providing for group or individual instruction;

(4) to gain conscious familiarity with the basic features of the English sound, grammar, lexical, and cultural systems; (Let me say in passing that the mere fact of being a native speaker of English does not qualify one to teach English as a second language without special training.)

(5) to learn about and experiment with methods and techniques of teaching English as a second or foreign language which would be most productive with their students, with their personalities, in their schools and in the communities not only of the school but also, where pertinent, from which the learners have come and to which they plan to return;

(6) to understand the dynamics and techniques of grouping, since these are crucial in teaching TESL and TEFL; (Not only must the teacher provide for differences

in abilities, learning levels, and interests among language learners but also, in some current organizational patterns, for the teaching of both language learners and native English speakers within the same classroom.)

(7) to learn how to utilize and/or develop simple instructional materials in harmony with program objectives and students' goals and for students with possible learning problems;

(8) to know how and when to evaluate achievement and proficiency in order to make students aware of their progress, and to modify or discard nonmotivating and nonproductive teaching practices;

(9) to make use of community resources--people and places--to enrich the students' learning experiences; (This is possible and happens daily in the most remote corners of the globe.)

(10) to provide a classroom environment conducive to successful learning and especially to the retention of pride and hope; and

(11) to integrate the English program with the other school and community experiences and activities of the student.

The last point mentioned brings us quite naturally to a brief overview of principles fundamental to curriculum development wherever TESL or TEFL are taught. (I am omitting any discussion of bilingual programs for the moment.) A well-designed curriculum--one that would facilitate learning and teaching--includes the following characteristics:

1. It uses the students and their background as the point of departure for the teaching of any aspect of the communication skills and of the culture of English-speaking peoples.

2. It reflects realistic objectives. It asks what knowledge and skills the students for whom the curriculum is intended need in their immediate future;

and how much one can reasonably hope to accomplish in the time available and in the community in which the school is located. Is it, for example, an English-speaking community? Is it a foreign language enclave within an English-speaking community? Is it in a country or city where English is seldom seen or heard?

3. It assigns priority to the vocabulary, structure, and cultural insights students need in order (a) to speak about matters relevant to them; (b) to use the language as a medium of instruction, where necessary; or (c) to enter school or vocational programs they aspire to.

4. It presents students with the knowledge they need about the meaning and appropriateness of linguistic items in the contexts and situations in which they could fit and about the presuppositions and sociocultural assumptions which underlie their use.

5. It generally recommends starting with listening and speaking skills, but moves ahead as quickly as possible to reading and writing. The age level of the student as well as his ability to understand and say--with reasonable facility--the material he will be asked to read, helps determine when reading and writing in English will be introduced. With older university students abroad, who need only translation or reading comprehension skills to enter the upper levels of specialized programs, even the brief period of listening-speaking alone is often reevaluated--generally, however, to the later regret of persons involved in crash programs of this type.

6. It does not neglect the listening and speaking skills even after reading and writing are introduced. On the contrary, reading and writing experiences are used as a basis for stimulating the kinds of activities which enable students to agree, to disagree, to discuss and to debate, or to express surprise, disap-

pointment, anger, sympathy, and compassion. Learners are made to realize from the first day that the new language will permit them to say anything they would say in their native tongue. As we know, a primary objective in today's programs is to develop "communicative competence" in learners; that is, to help them understand and produce language which is not only correct but also appropriate in the varied functions which language serves in real-life situations.

7. It suggests experiences and procedures which require the learners and not the teacher to do most of the talking in English.

8. It makes provision for relating all new linguistic and cultural items to those which students had learned in previous units of work or at lower learning levels. It usually recommends that lessons start with a wide-ranging, creative "warm-up" period in which material acquired previously is reinserted frequently in a variety of communication activities, thus facilitating its retrieval from the students' memory stores. Moreover, materials such as dialogues, reading passages and grammatical structures are recombined often so that students develop awareness of the facts that language learning is cumulative, that the same material may be used in situations other than the one in which it was first presented, and that language makes infinite use of finite means.

9. It integrates language material which may have been taught in isolation --features of pronunciation, vocabulary, structure--in authentic communication situations. Students are asked to dramatize dialogues, to formulate and answer questions on them and especially to suggest alternative utterances in them; to listen to broadcasts; to play language games; to write letters; to take notes; to engage in directed and free question-and-answer activities and in guided or spontaneous role-playing; in sum, to participate in activities appropriate to their age and to their learning levels, which will reaffirm their conviction

tnat English is another vehicle for normal communication.

10. It provides for continuity of instruction--both horizontal and vertical. Integration of the abilities of listening, speaking, reading, writing--one of the facets of horizontal articulation--is vitally important in curriculum design. Continuity of instruction on a vertical level--vertical articulation--is also essential. A curriculum for each learning level is generally explicitly spelled out so that teachers are made aware not only of the probable linguistic and cultural content, activities, and experiences of students who come to them from less advanced levels, but also of the expectations of instructors who will teach these students at the next higher level.

11. It recommends integrative language and cultural experiences in which all students learn a basic body of material. A good curriculum, however, also provides for the inclusion of differentiating experiences which recognize the uniqueness of each individual and, where essential, his vocational and professional needs. Today, there is a greater realization, for example, that not all students can be expected to create plays or write essays on abstract topics; not all students need produce various intonation patterns unless they are going to be broadcasters or teachers. Enrichment techniques are generally suggested, however, which can be offered to individuals who have the potential and will be engaged in teaching, broadcasting or playwriting.

12. It encourages learners to speak about their native culture in English. Please permit a personal comment here. If the English language is indeed another instrument of communication, what better way to demonstrate that we believe in the truth of that statement than by having students talk about their foods, their holidays, their folk tales, or any other cultural aspects of interest to them? The unrealistic notion of complete immersion in English culture has been

reevaluated in recent years in schools in which there exists a genuine concern for integrating the affective and cognitive domains in language programs.

13. A well-balanced curriculum gives students insight into the culture of English speakers both incidentally, as the need arises in dialogue study or in reading, and at later learning levels through more systematic student-centered and directed procedures.

14. It provides for flexibility and an eclectic approach in content and methodology.

15. It recommends the adaptation of the curriculum based on the known experiences of students outside the classroom. With older students, recreational or work activities, the reading they may do in their native language, the movies they may see, visits to the language laboratory, if one exists, are skillfully woven by the teacher into the English program.

16. It sustains the initial motivation of learners by planning for a wide array of satisfying class and group-learning experiences through which they can achieve success and, most importantly, retain pride in their native language and culture, while learning a new language and becoming sensitive to other cultures.

17. Last but not least, it makes provision for evaluating not only the student's growth toward desired objectives, but also the curriculum itself--its content, activities, instructional materials and testing procedures. It recommends changes as needed--acknowledging errors, false dogmas and nonproductive prescriptive activities--in order to make learning and teaching the pleasurable, successful experiences they can be.

I am sure you need no reminder that it is the classroom teacher who implements the relatively straightforward curriculum principles outlined above.

Other teaching situations, unfortunately, present unresolved, extraordinarily complex problems.

And so, having mentioned the principal areas of similarities, we should now turn our attention to ways in which TESL and TEFL programs differ. As you will see, the differences add to the burden of the already overburdened but always willing classroom teacher.

Let us start with ESL and bilingual programs in English-speaking countries. The problems are so many and so complex that it is difficult to know whether one is asking the right questions, let alone supplying acceptable answers. I shall resolve my dilemma by asking questions--not of teachers who live with these questions daily--but of scientists, research workers, and community leaders in the hope that the questions will suggest additional or, perhaps I should say, different avenues of inquiry. I shall mention my point of view, where pertinent, for whatever value it may have.

I agree fully with the major thrust of Professor Bowen's recent article in the *TESOL Quarterly*, and that is that we should concentrate on research that is delimited in scope, thus ensuring its early completion, and on projects that are easily replicable. I would be more demanding, however, and add another criterion: that published research results of successful experiments be couched in such terms that they could be used by a teacher tomorrow, if he so wishes, in order to enhance student learning.

I shall mention these issues only briefly, since I am aware of the fact that some of them are not entirely relevant to your work. Knowing, however, of your deep concern with professional matters of national interest, I hope that some items will spur you to write letters to editors or to become vocal community school board members.

Among the questions that we can no longer defer should be included:

How can we place language learners of any age in classes which would enable them to learn the English they need, not only to make a personal-social adjustment to their community, but also to ensure successful participation in the curriculum areas or the specialized programs offered by the schools?

Might we consider placing learners over the age of nine in intensive English-learning classes for several hours a day? In order to avoid even the label of segregation, safeguards must be provided, of course, in terms of: (1) continuous student evaluation so that learners can be moved, the moment they are ready, into regular classes with native speakers of the same age; (2) programming which would ensure their participation from their first day of admission in music, art, physical education, recreation and lunch programs with native speakers; (3) a school and community-wide orientation program for all persons in order to foster the idea that these students must be accepted in regular classes although they may still make errors in pronunciation and grammar and may lack a knowledge of certain concepts.

To continue my questions, does a wide age-span in a class affect learning? How can a teacher deal with a variety of maturity levels and learning levels in one class?

Are pull-out programs (often called "push-out" programs) in which students leave their regular class for 20 or more minutes a day for English instruction really effective? If not, how can they be changed? What other administrative procedures can be devised to ensure pupil integration, special intensive help as needed and, most essential, coordination of learning in the

pull-out class and in other classes in which the learner is placed?

Where can we place students over about the age of 14 who may never have been in school anywhere or who may be functionally illiterate in their native tongue? Do we really believe that, except with intensive specially prepared programs and with motivated and gifted pupils, we can close the eight-year gap? What special measures should be taken?

How can we maintain positive self-images in these learners as they move, to quote from Herman's[2] study in Israel: " ... from anticipation, to initial conformity, to discouragement, to crisis, and finally--hopefully--to adjustment and integration"?

What assistance must be given classroom teachers in order to help them reach language learners in whatever type of school organization is in existence?

Limitations of time permit me to mention minimum essentials only. Teachers need the services of paraprofessionals who speak the language of the learners in order to help in the reception of students and to explain placement procedures to them, to interpret school regulations, to list and explain school and community resources to students, and to assist in the preparation of instructional materials.

Of even more vital benefit to students is to enlist the aid of empathetic native speakers to act as guidance counselors. In the majority of cases, only an empathetic person possessing an intimate familiarity with the language and culture of the students can be effective. I underline the word empathetic, because not every native speaker should engage in counseling. It is often saddening to note the speed with which some people forget how slippery the first rung of the ladder was when they have reached some point above it.

Teachers need assistance from many sources in order to prepare linguistic and cultural experiences, activities and materials to cope adequately with the diversity in maturity and learning levels noted above. The materials must show recognition of the fact that, in addition to different age levels--which may lead us to make certain assumptions about the cognitive abilities of pupils--we must consider the different points on the continuum of English knowledge and skills on which each learner may be. Materials such as picture and word files, individual worksheets containing pronunciation, grammatical and lexical items for intensive study, reading and writing activities and basic concepts within the various cultures by which the learner will be surrounded as well as in all the curriculum areas of the school, must be made available to all teachers of ESL and to teachers of the other specialized areas, in which English is the medium of instruction.

The mind boggles even at the thought of committees of 20 people in each community preparing such material! Are we aware of the fact that in many schools the classroom teacher--who cannot be expected to know the languages of all his pupils and whose classroom may contain native English speakers--is asked to prepare such instructional materials and to present them to language learners, often without the assistance of a paraprofessional who could make initial understanding of the material possible for the learner? I wish I were merely painting a dark picture but, unfortunately, the description is all too real.

May we now take a hasty look at programs for so-called bilinguals. I say "so-called" because I consider the term a misnomer. If pupils were bilingual in the denotative sense there would be little urgency for organizing programs as they exist in some schools today. I believe strongly that pupils should learn their native language and should be made consciously aware of their rich cultural heritage. I deplore the fact that no one ever thought of teaching me standard

Italian or of giving me an appreciation of Italian culture. Moreover, as I noted above, it is essential that older functionally illiterate students especially acquire--in their native language--key concepts they will need for living, working, playing and assuming family and civic responsibilities in their communities.

But allow me to ask some pertinent--and impertinent--questions.

Is it not true that at least a modicum of the pride which comes with learning about one's heritage stems from the fact that people other than ourselves are made aware of that heritage? How is this necessary, basic facet of pride being fostered?

Are "bilingual" programs in existence for speakers of all non-English languages?

How old are the learners we are speaking about? The ideal program, of course, should start in kindergarten. What can we do to make bilingual programs effective for functionally illiterate youngsters of 14 or 16 who may have to enter the world of work as soon as the state's or country's labor laws allow?

Does the native language of the learner already have a written form?

Have a number of reliable and valid experiments been undertaken which would prove that reading--especially when the language has no written form--should be started in the native language for pupils of 12 to 18, let us say, who may be illiterate in that language? Have we considered priorities from both the affective and cognitive points of view?

Have we really engaged in sufficient research to ascertain whether English and the native language concepts should be given during the same hour, during the same day, on alternate days, or in alternate months?

Should they be given by the same teacher?

Should conceptual bases be presented in both languages, or concepts in one and labels only in both?

I am not advocating that the inception of bilingual programs wait for answers to questions such as these, but it is imperative that experimentation and continuous evaluation be built into the programs from the outset. Moreover, programs which have shown promise should be used in other places with adaptations required by the local situation. Why do educators feel that they have to plow the same field when there are so many others in need of attention? Why do some often demean the intelligence of well-read teachers by stating categorically that nothing has ever been said about a topic when, in fact, hundreds of articles and numerous texts have appeared on the subject?

A major concern of teachers in the area of bilingual and bicultural education is the answer to the question: When do we close the gap? When can linguistically handicapped youngsters enter a "regular" school and find success in its programs with their age peers, whether or not we approve of the school's offerings in their entirety? Observation and empirical studies indicate that total participation with peers in the school program will be a tremendous source of pride and motivation to these youngsters. Moving ahead to higher levels and to colleges with their peers will be a goal to which most of them will want to aspire, given the opportunity. Have we ever thought of asking them--the youngsters and parents involved--what their goals and feelings are? Parenthetically, I should mention that many Chinese parents prefer that Chinese not be taught--they insist that they will "take care of" the Chinese language, but that the school's and teacher's responsibility is to teach English.

The fundamental question in discussing any educational program is, of course:

Do students learn? If they do, my fears may be groundless. In this regard, I was delighted to hear Professor B. J. Robinett's announcement that a committee of the TESOL organization has been established to study the role of English in bilingual programs.

There is another crucial area of concern about which the people involved should be polled, and that is the area of teaching English to dialect speakers in the United States and in countries of the English Commonwealth. I realize that this is a problem multiplied a thousandfold by political, racial, and economic issues. But there are, nonetheless, questions to which we should seek reliable answers. For example, what makes us think even for a moment that people whose skin is not white necessarily speak a nonstandard version of English? If they do, and they are first taught in so-called Black English, when and how do we help them make the transition to the standard English they will need to get into most colleges, to aspire to certain professions, to enter the mainstream of a predominantly white society, if that is their wish?

In this regard I beg your indulgence as I first read excerpts from an article by Bayard Rustin, Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, and then as I tell you of a recent personal experience at Georgetown.

> "No doubt the motives of some of these new 'black linguistics experts' are sincere. They want to see black children learn, but do they want to prepare them for life outside the ghetto? Do they want to see them become first-class citizens? 'Black English', after all, has nothing to do with blackness but derives from the conditions of lower-class life in the South (poor Southern whites also speak 'black English'). Reinforcing this consequence of poverty will only perpetuate poverty since it will prevent black children from mastering the means of communication in an advanced technological society with a highly educated population.
>
> "I am sure there are some black proponents of 'black English' who feel that we must retain our racial distinctiveness and avoid the self-negating process of assimilation. But this is really a false issue. Immigrants, who were much more foreign to American culture than Negroes, realized when they arrived in America that in order to succeed they had

to master certain skills, and they did so while retaining their ethnic distinctiveness.

"The problem with many 'black cultists' is that they are willing to sacrifice economic advancement in the name of separate peoplehood without realizing that the unique history and character of black Americans will survive *economic* assimilation and the achievement of first-class citizenship."

The same sentiments were voiced at a Georgetown seminar when I was asked by Dean Alatis to speak on reading to a sizable group of black educators. At the end of the conference several teachers came up, one of whom asked me without preamble what I thought of a book she was holding. The title was in Black English and there were two black children--stereotypes, naturally--on the cover. My reaction was immediate. I said I thought it was awful. She cried, "I hoped you'd say that. What makes those stupid white people think that because our skin is black we talk like that?" There was no question of white or black at that moment. We were simply two teachers concerned about the future of youngsters and about the future of society.

It may be useless to belabor the point and ask the same simple questions again. Do we place black children who do, in fact, speak a dialect in separate and thus segregated groups in order to make it possible for them to read such books? Do they ever get to read the standard version of the same book? When, how, by whom is the transition made?

It is simply not true that "You can't go home again" after you've learned the standard language. In the first place, no one is advocating the elimination of the dialect which remains throughout one's life a source of close family ties and friendships, a source of warmth, affection and pleasant memories. As we know, intelligent educators in the many countries throughout the world where the first language is a dialect recommend the addition of the standard language. Its functional use in those situations where it would be the more appreciated

or needed enables the person who knows both of them to embrace wider social and vocational horizons. It may be interesting to note that dialects in danger of extinction are being introduced as second languages in some schools in many countries throughout the world.

Today, except for South Africa, I should like to submit that it is not skin color which may shut doors, but linguistic and cultural differences resulting primarily from economic conditions. Southern Italians who do not speak the standard dialect are generally looked upon with contempt, despite the same skin color, and are considered members of minority subcultures by the better endowed Northerners.

At least two other programs offered in English-speaking countries warrant our attention: programs for adult foreign students who plan to return to their native lands, and for adults who expect to remain. Time will permit only fleeting comments on both. Moreover, the very active NAFSA and ABE groups are deeply aware of some of the matters in need of further discussion and evaluation.

With respect to foreign students who will return to their native lands, more intensive counseling is generally needed to ascertain their aspirations, their strategies for learning, and their emotional conflicts and needs. We must make every reasonable effort to help these students overcome nostalgia, gain security, and get into the programs of their choice as quickly as is feasible. This suggests several courses of action: intensive classes under well-trained, empathetic teachers in which specific kinds of reading and writing skills are emphasized; more importantly, a college or school-wide public relations program aimed at persuading the regular English and other specialized departments to accept these adults although many of them may not have attained mastery of all the concepts and skills ordinarily expected of native English speakers (it is

disheartening to the special English teachers to learn that many of their students who could be successful if given just a little further help are turned away from regular classes); and, finally, a system which would enable us to get feedback from schools they may enter in their countries, or from their employers. Are we really preparing them for roles of leadership? Are our admissions and placement procedures clearly delineated? Are overseas credits evaluated with all possible speed? These and similar questions must be answered if we want these students to serve as spokesmen for English-speakers' values of efficiency, honesty, kindness and justice.

Adult Basic Education programs are also fraught with problems, since students may run the gamut from illiteracy to high levels of literacy. They may range in age from 18 to 80; some may have been in the country 20 years before deciding to enter a program; the reasons for their participation are varied and many. In small centers, this diversity places a tremendous burden on the classroom teacher who will have to group students and individualize much of the instruction, particularly when courses may be characterized by a high rate of absenteeism caused by work and family responsibilities.

I would urge that the courses not be centered merely around topics supposedly aimed at the acquisition of citizenship papers. At any rate, it has always been a mystery to me how learning that Howe invented the threshing machine or Singer the sewing machine would lead anyone to become a civic-minded, socially and politically responsible citizen.

Might it not be more desirable to give these adult, highly motivated students the key real-life concepts and the language they should know in order not to endanger their own and their family's health and welfare, in order to find housing or jobs, in order to learn about their children's schooling, in order

to avoid possible exploitation, in order to live with their neighbors in a climate of reciprocal understanding and respect?

There is still another domain to our responsibilities as noted by Professor B. J. Robinett. The past 25 years have witnessed the phenomenal growth of English as the first international language, with a concomitant need for native English speakers capable not only of teaching English as a foreign language, but also of training native teachers to take over these duties within the educational system as quickly as is feasible. The British have been doing just this--and superbly well--for several hundred years.

Americans also do a most creditable job in assignments abroad, but we--and I include myself--try too hard on occasions, and especially during our first weeks or months in a country, to change educational practices to fit our ideas of what they should be, without being fully aware of the political, economic or social situations which may have given rise to them.

In assignments outside the continental United States, it is essential to identify with teachers and their problems: for instance, large classes (up to 100 in some places), pitifully small salaries, or examination systems that concentrate very often on minutiae of grammar and on translation. Trying to help by showing the latest overhead projector or laboratory, or by insisting that translations be eliminated forthwith, does little for teacher morale and even less for the maintenance of cordial relations.

Would it not be more desirable to help teachers do more effectively the things they are going to have to do anyway--translate, group students, make use of the most inexpensive kind of visual materials, and use their texts more efficiently?

I have rushed through comments on TESL and TEFL, undoubtedly omitting many

thoughts in your minds, but I must hurry on to complete the task set for myself. My comments and questions may sound unduly pessimistic. I would not want you to think that I have lost my optimistic viewpoint or my perennial faith in the resilience and good judgment of teachers. There are encouraging signs everywhere: (1) in your superb materials and testing programs; (2) in teacher-training programs at the universities; (3) in materials being published; (4) in the plans of many governments for improved language learning and teaching; (5) in the variety of programs offered here and abroad; (6) in the broader involvement and commitments to teachers, and thus to child and adult learners, of the TESOL organization as demonstrated, among numerous other signs, by the wider ethnic and school-level representation in the Executive and other standing committees, in the promotion of local affiliates, and in its collaboration with related national and international organizations; and (7) finally, in conferences similar to one to be held in April, sponsored jointly by England and Hungary.

There is still much to be done, however, on a personal and professional level. Too many statements in journals, too many research studies, too many university programs, although addressing themselves to problems of teachers and learners, seem not to have had the benefit of the collaboration of the very people they hope to serve. Results of experiments are often obscured in language replete with newly-coined terms or in familiar terms used in unprecedented ways. Teaching applications are seldom mentioned, and in the few cases when they are they are not clarified sufficiently. If any research study contains anything of value to any human beings, its results should be couched in language that most people will understand.

Some authors of teacher's manuals are also guilty of omitting facts which

teachers should know if the manual is to be used effectively and if teachers are to maintain a sense of security. Items of importance which should be mentioned include: In which language are some of the beautiful motivations recommended for reading, or for acquiring any other skill, to be given, particularly at the first level? What age group are the texts intended for? What adaptations will have to be made in TESL and in TEFL situations? At what level should code-switching--varieties of language or registers (or whatever term we wish to use) needed in social situations--be presented and practiced?

Some proposals made in books and articles are unrealistic. How can we recommend that we teach only what is not universal in language, when the surface manifestation of each language differs from that of every other? How does one go about individualizing instruction for 400 students each day in countries like Turkey or for 20 language learners and ten nonlanguage learners in science, math, social studies and other curriculum areas in countries like England, Canada, Australia, or the United States? How and where does one learn how to develop rapport with learners, community members and colleagues; how to select and grade material; how to group; how to manage a classroom; how to plan a day's or a week's lessons for a class, several groups or individual newcomers? One of today's misunderstood slogans, "freedom to teach," does not, should not, mean entering the classroom without a carefully prepared plan and without the materials needed to ensure the success of the plan, always in terms of student learning.

Why should busy, overworked, classroom teachers, in elementary and secondary schools particularly, develop competencies which will have little or no relation to the actual job to be done, at least in this moment of time? There are too many essential competencies needed from the moment one faces one's first class.

University programs should not only prepare young people to teach a language

effectively, if indeed all do. Universities should be in the vanguard of any movement to bring members of the community closer together; to involve undergraduate and graduate students in significant programs of school-community involvement (e.g., the one-to-one home tutoring project); to encourage interdisciplinary research which is desperately lacking; to deflect from teaching--after a long period of counseling--any student teacher who seems to dislike people.

With that last observation, we have gotten to the core of the matter. Let me underscore again that more important and far-reaching in effect than curricula, methods, or techniques are the personality and the preparation of the classroom teacher. The heart of any successful program is the teacher.

While it may be more difficult, although not impossible, to change personality traits, any person with enthusiasm and with a good, broad preparation can become an outstanding teacher. I am so convinced that this is true that it has become a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. I have worked with thousands of teachers in over 40 years. There were only a few that I felt had entered the wrong profession.

Let me outline some of the characteristics of superior teachers, those sitting in this audience today and those whose responsibilities made it impossible for them to be here. These hallmarks of the teachers I have had the privilege to know will be given in no particular order, since they are of equal importance in the classroom. Moreover, they are to be added to competencies noted earlier in my remarks.

1. The teacher is committed to the principle that all normal people can learn. He modifies curriculum content, however, as he ascertains the strengths and weaknesses of learners and--with older students--their aspirations. He makes every effort to help these students achieve their aspirations or redirect them

into more attainable channels. With relation to aspiration, he realizes that what one student may consider success may not be important for another.

2. While he does not neglect suprasegmental features of language, he knows that other factors in learning are of greater, of supreme importance, and that these should permeate the total classroom environment. Learners must feel loved, respected, and secure. They must be made to feel that they are important members of the group, that they can assume responsibilities, and that they can achieve success.

3. He keeps the motivation of students at a high level by using their interests, their lives, and their communities as the starting point for the introduction of all material; by adapting his procedures; by using a variety of instructional materials in addition to the basic text; and by reassuring them of the normalcy of reaching plateaus in learning.

4. He recognizes that the correction of student errors is a matter requiring sensitivity and, above all, common sense. For example, when a student is expressing himself creatively he does not correct each error, unless the error impedes comprehension; in language drills, he never repeats a student's error, but he may instead say "Listen," followed by the model or the correct answer. While he praises a student for any sign of improvement, he would not say "Very good" (and go on to another student with another question) to a student who may respond something like, "He doesn't got no pencil." Not only would this do the student who made the error a grave disservice, but it may also confuse others who know that the answer is not correct.

5. He provides for individual differences in class and in out-of-class tasks. He knows that individuals learn in different ways and at different rates: some learn by intensive repetition and over-learning; some learn best by trial

and error; younger children learn through play activities, through tasting foods, through touching, through hearing and identifying noises around them; older students generally learn best by applying generalizations to new situations.

6. He organizes each learning experience carefully. He selects, grades, presents and practices language items for emphasis in a systematic, logical manner which will facilitate the students' restructuring and subsequent acquisition of them.

7. He plans in advance the communication situations and the meaningful contexts through which the functional use of all material will be made clear.

8. He provides in each lesson not only for practice leading to necessary habit formation, but also to real-world use of the language. The older students he also helps to perceive the underlying rules that govern our use of language and, through pertinent questions, to arrive at a generalization (always in descriptive terms) which they can transfer to other appropriate communication situations.

9. He uses the native language of the students sparingly in the classroom, if he is familiar with it and if all students speak the same language, but he does not hesitate to use it or ask a student teacher or community assistant to do so in order to clarify instructions, to ensure that essential information has been understood and, most important, to maintain the students' sense of security. In this regard, he may also (a) organize a "buddy" system in which able, more bilingual students help those in need, or (b) plan for a few minutes at the end of each hour when students may ask him or each other questions in their native tongue. Moreover, he realizes that it is perfectly natural for learners to speak among themselves in their native tongue during lunch hours or recreation periods until they acquire enough English to engage in normal communication.

10. He knows that while group recitation is desirable during many phases of the lesson, especially in early levels, because (a) it gives the learners a sense of initial security, and (b) it enables all of them to produce speech much more frequently than would be possible otherwise, communication is essentially an activity conducted by individuals. He has learned, therefore, to plan language activities which duplicate or simulate those needed in actual communication.

11. He has become accustomed to preparing or to utilizing existing instructional materials which enable pairs of learners to practice together.

12. He has learned to supplement the basic text where necessary by preparing dialogues, drills or reading selections in order to lend variety to a lesson or to reinforce--through their recombination in more extended communication activities--language or cultural items which have been presented.

13. He has become skillful in preparing scripts for tapes, in voicing them, and in integrating laboratory practice (where one exists) and classroom activity.

14. He is aware of the fact that there are no passive language skills. Listening and reading are extremely complex and demand the active involvement of students. He therefore devotes much more time in class to the development of listening comprehension. He realizes that while it is possible to control what we say, we cannot control what other people say, especially in movies or on television, nor is it generally possible to listen again to something we may not have understood.

15. He plans reading lessons--story-telling at the lowest levels--which will not only extend the pupils' knowledge of the language, but which will also foster discussion and thought. With older students, he may decide that it is

desirable and possible to introduce reading from the first day. He does not assign reading unless he has clarified linguistic items and cultural allusions in it. Moreover, he generally reads aloud the material the students have been assigned, especially at beginning levels. He teaches them to use contextual clues, cognates where pertinent, and to make effective use of dictionaries.

16. He incorporates guided writing activities in his plans, which will lead gradually to more creative, "free" student compositions. Through a gamut of experiences such as reading, listening, and discussion he stimulates students to think of ideas, to put them in a logical, informational sequence, and to find the language most appropriate to express them.

17. He provides students with cross-cultural insights both incidentally--as he explains allusions in dialogues or reading materials--and, later, in student-directed projects or in more formal discussions.

18. He makes sure that students retain their sense of individual dignity and ethnic pride, while learning to appreciate aspects of English and other cultures. Both with relation to their culture and to that of others, he guides students not only to sense the basic similarities of the human experience, but also to realize that "different from" does not mean "better than" or "worse than." One of his major objectives in the teaching of culture is to make students sensitive to their own values and to the values and customs of any cultural group with whom they will come into contact. It is not the idea of biculturalism alone which we must foster, but that of cultural pluralism.

19. He learns to select and use only those audio-visual aids which will enable the students to learn a particular language item or cultural fact more efficiently.

20. He creates an opportunity for learning resulting from incidental hap-

penings in the class, the school, or in the community.

21. He utilizes the strengths of his students, while giving them the feeling that they are responsible human beings, by having them help in the numerous tasks of the classroom, such as: preparing instructional materials; checking homework or test papers; assuming the roles of group leaders, recorders, or reporters at different times; serving as "teachers" in asking questions; correcting blackboard work; helping fellow students who may have been absent or who have fallen behind in some aspect of the work.

22. He uses the same piece of material--a dialogue, a reading selection, a set of flash cards or some pictures--for multiple purposes. For example, while a reading selection may be useful in expanding vocabulary, in teaching skills of comprehension, or in motivating the presentation of a grammatical structure, he also uses it as a source for aural comprehension, for dictation, or for the study of model paragraphs leading to written composition.

23. Where relevant, he plans out-of-school visits for his students, to meet with people in the community.

24. He prepares and gives frequent tests which will help (a) gauge the achievement and proficiency of students, (b) diagnose individual learning problems and, most important, (c) judge the effectiveness of his own teaching procedures.

25. In sum, the teacher is educator, counselor, guide and friend, a model students respect and want to emulate, a sort of Dante's Virgil who supports them as they move from the Inferno of anomie to a Paradise in which they receive the rewards of total enlightenment as they attain true bilingualism and an appreciation of cultural pluralism.

Do you wonder that it has been written that the power of the teacher can change

the world?

Now while I am admittedly dazzled by these extraordinary qualities of teachers, I have not failed to notice a serious flaw, one which deprives communities, universities and teaching organizations of the contributions teachers can and must make to the profession. You have a major responsibility to write about your philosophy, your theories, your techniques, and your successes. What those teachers among you feel may not be worth writing about because it may seem "run of the mill" or "not unusual," will give other experienced teachers the knowledge that you share their points of view, and beginning teachers the insights and skills they need to cope with an extremely complex and difficult assignment.

I urge you, please, to raise your voices at meetings and, above all, to lift your pens. The *TESOL Quarterly* and *Newsletter*, the *English Teaching Forum*, *English Teaching*, and other publications need and will welcome your suggestions and recommendations.

Let me conclude by recalling what Dwight Bolinger, Robin Lakoff, Robert Hogan and others have said about "doublespeak," about truth, and about the criteria needed for communication. One sentence of Robert Hogan's about language learning stands out vividly and that is, "It is more important for the truth of a statement and a sentence to agree, than for the subject and the verb to agree." (It goes without saying that he is not recommending that we ignore grammatical correctness.) I am certain that there can be no disagreement with the fundamental importance of his observation about the need for truth in communication.

Allow me, therefore, to address a plea to all of us. Despite the strides we have made in TESL or TEFL program objectives, moving--as we have--from a knowledge of grammar as a terminal objective to the development of reading skills, to

an emphasis on structure, to a concern for meaning, to the goal of communicative competence, to a search for truth in language, I should like to submit that communicative competence and truth may not be enough. Understanding and speaking a common language or stating the truth as one sees it do not necessarily lead to true communication. We have had ample evidence of this incontrovertible fact throughout history in civil wars and in the irrational persecutions of one's countrymen.

We must have the courage to stop drilling or reading or whatever, and instead take steps to help our students from their earliest years to listen to each other with attention and with interest, to appreciate differing points of view, to respect diversity, and to question their own values. Instead of expending all our efforts on extinguishing or rechaneling false linguistic analogies, let us change the direction of our teaching whenever and wherever necessary to extinguish or rechannel aggression, to help our students accept another's opinions and feelings, or to eradicate bigotry and racial prejudices.

The world, our countries and our communities will survive with faulty pronunciation and less than perfect grammar, but can we be sure they will continue to survive without real communication, without a spirit of community, indeed without real communion among peoples? Part of the answer lies in the hands of everyone in our profession. Seeking the truth to that answer is a challenge we cannot, we dare not, refuse to accept.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Betty Wallace Robinett, "The Domains of TESOL," *TESOL Quarterly*, 6:3, pp. 197-207.

[2]S. Herman, "Explorations in the Social Psychology of Language Choice," *Human Relations*, 14, pp. 149-164. 1961.